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[s.l.]: [s.n.], March 1923

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The Banker-Farmer

WISCONSIN
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News Bulletin

A Little Journal of Agricultural
Information for the Farmer

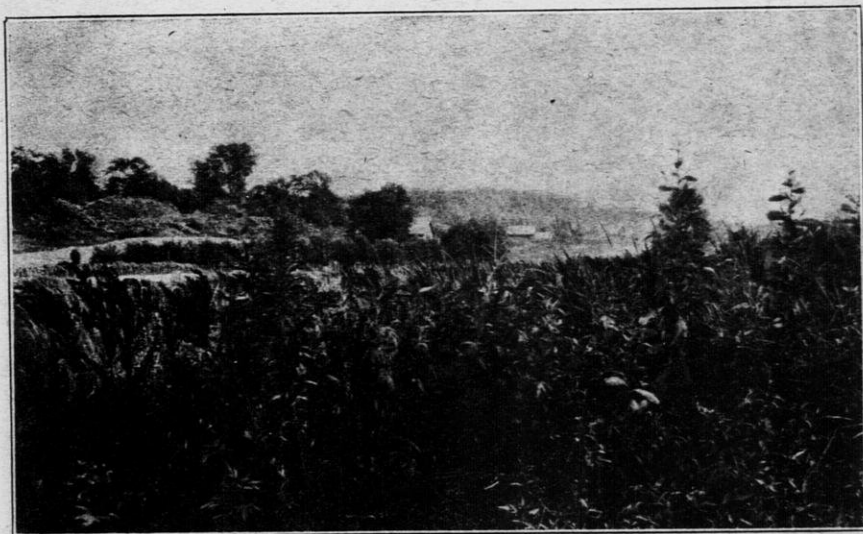
BANKER-
FARMER
EXCHANGE

BULLETIN No. 31

MARCH, 1923

The Weed Problem. Ways to Help Solve It.

By PROFESSOR A. L. STONE,
College of Agriculture, U. of W.



Yellow dock, quack grass, wild lettuce and other weeds on a hill side adjoining a long valley. The seeds are ripe and ready to be carried by the water for miles down the valley. Such neglect shows a poor civic spirit on the part of the land owner.

Compliments of

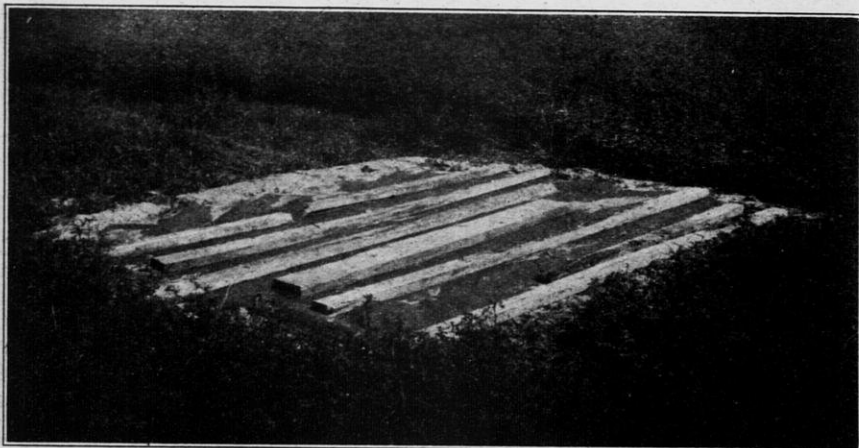
BANKER-FARMER EXCHANGE

1822 Chadbourne Avenue,
MADISON, WIS.

The Weed Problem. Ways to Help Solve It.

By PROFESSOR A. L. STONE,
College of Agriculture, U. of W.

Weeds are among the worst enemies of crop production and maximum crops can never be produced on fields badly infested with them. This is emphatically true if the weeds are perennial and hard to kill, like quack grass, Canada thistles, ox-eye daisy, snapdragon, wild morning-glory and other similar weeds that spread by underground parts as well as by seed. To keep such weeds from bearing seed will not destroy them. It is necessary to kill the roots in order to completely eradicate them, and this makes their destruction costly. While it costs something to get rid of them, it can be done by the use of ordinary farm tools if the will power and persistence of the farm owner or renter is sufficiently great. Every year the weeds are allowed to remain the yields of crops are reduced and maximum production is impossible. In these days of high prices of land and living it is for the best interest of the State that our farms produce to the highest possible capacity.



One of the effective and economical ways to kill small patches of noxious weeds. Note the planks and other materials used to hold the paper in place. Earth may be used around the edges, but causes the paper to disintegrate if used on the patch.

HOW WEEDS CAUSE LOSS

THEY REDUCE CROP YIELDS

By using moisture and plant food which the crop should have. Weeds use more moisture than crops because they grow larger and have greater leaf surface. They stand drought better and in dry seasons may entirely kill the crop by robbing it of moisture.

By shading, crowding and dwarfing the grain crop, thus causing shrinkage of the grain and lowering the quality.

By helping to perpetuate plant diseases which are often propagated on weedy plants. Also in a weedy field the plants stay wet longer in the morning and rusts and smuts have better chance to develop.

By sucking life from crop plants, as dodder on clover, broom rapes on hemp, etc.

THEY INCREASE THE COST OF HARVESTING

By extra wear and tear on machinery caused by cutting the coarse weed stems.

By causing heavier draft on horses and making it harder to keep them in condition.

By requiring extra twine to bind up the weeds, especially the coarse ones.

By twining about the corn and grain, choking the binder, causing bundles to stick together and making shocking difficult.

By the thorny or spiny stems of Canada thistles and other similar plants, causing great discomfort and loss of time and temper on the part of the workers.

THEY LOWER THE SELLING PRICES OF FARM PRODUCTS

By injury to the grain, caused by the crowding and shading.

By causing dockage on the grain because of weed seeds in it. The wheat alone which was delivered to the Minnesota mills and elevators from 1903 to 1917 was docked to the extent of \$50,000,000!

By the presence of bur weeds and thistles in hay so animals fail to thrive on it.

By giving offensive flavors to dairy products where cattle are pastured in fields infested with wild onions and other weeds with strong odors.

By injury to wool and furs because of weed seeds and burs.

THEY REDUCE THE NET PROFIT ON THE FARM

By often poisoning live stock and human beings, as poisonous weeds are numerous. Poison hemlock, horsetail, wild parsnip, corn cockle and poison ivy cause much loss of life among animals and great discomfort, and loss of money in doctors' bills for human beings.

By requiring payment of taxes for weed control with practically no return, so far as complete eradication is concerned.

By requiring an immense amount of labor to control at an enormous cost to the State. By the loss from the factors already mentioned under 1, 2, and 3. Weeds are causing an annual loss to Wisconsin farmers of nearly forty millions of dollars! This is taxation with absolutely no return! Why endure it? It is time we got rid of our weeds and watched more closely to see that the fields are not reinfested.

HOW TO PREVENT WEED INTRODUCTION

BY CUTTING WEEDS

All weeds along roadsides, fences, and in waste places should be cut so that their seeds cannot be blown or washed upon the fields.

BY CARE IN USE OF FEEDING STUFFS

Many feeding stuffs contain large numbers of weed seeds which are not injured by passage through the digestive tracts of animals and are apt to be spread over the farm in the manure.

BY COMPOSTING MANURE

Weed seeds which get into the manure, either through feeding stuffs or the bedding of animals, may be killed by piling the manure in large sized piles for sixty days. Fermentation of the manure kills the weed seeds.

BY CAREFUL CLEANING OF FARM MACHINERY

All tools taken from a weedy field to one which is free from weeds should be carefully cleaned before the transfer is made. Careful cleaning of a thrashing machine should be insisted upon before it is allowed to come onto the farm. These machines are often prolific carriers of weed seeds.

BY ASCERTAINING THE IDENTITY OF ALL NEW WEEDS

Every unfamiliar weed which appears upon the farm should be sent to some good authority



Opposite sides of the same road. The roadside at the left is in sod, free from anything but clover. The other side is grown up to sweet clover, quack grass and ragweeds. Which is the better farmer? How will the good farmer keep his farm free from weeds?

on weeds for identification and for information concerning its habits before it is allowed to become established.

BY USING ONLY CLEAN SEED

Crop seeds which are badly infested with weed seeds are apt to be low in germinating power also. Although the clean seeds are higher priced, less seed is required to sow an acre and no new weeds are planted, requiring several years' time and much labor to eradicate.

HOW TO KILL ANNUALS AND BIENNIALS

By early and intensive cultivation.

By pulling scattered plants while soil is moist and before seeds are formed.

By a rotation of crops in which the cultivated crop is kept clean and no weeds allowed to go to seed.

The secret of success in the eradication of these two classes of weeds is to keep them from producing seed.

HOW TO KILL PERENNIALS

Pull or dig scattered plants before seeds form.

Cut off roots two inches below the earth's surface at blooming time and drop a handful of salt at the cutting point.

Cover small patches with heavy tar paper. Lap paper six inches and extend it for three feet beyond the edges of the patch. Fasten paper down with fence boards or two-by-fours, etc.

Plow as soon as crop is off, just deep enough to turn roots to the surface. Use spring tooth harrow until ground freezes. Do not let green leaves appear. Plow again in spring. Use spring tooth harrow until July first and seed to buckwheat or millet, one bushel to the acre. If weeds are very bad, continue harrowing until September first and sow to fall rye.

Canada thistles may be killed by cultivating as above until first week in June and seeding to alfalfa, 20 pounds of seed per acre. A good stand of alfalfa is sure death to thistles if enough preparatory work has been done.

On heavy clay or where weeds are very thick it may be necessary to summer fallow the field.

The method is less important than the user; any weed can be eradicated if the farmer is as persistent as the weed.

Prosperous agriculture in Wisconsin can not be maintained unless the further spread of noxious weeds is prevented and those now here are eradicated.



Here are a number of grade Holsteins, purchased in February, and shipped to Ames, Iowa, through the Banker-Farmer Exchange. **REAL QUALITY!**

* * * * *

The Exchange is now engaged in filling another order for Iowa—a carload of mixed Holsteins and Guernseys—and same are being selected by our field man **without outside supervision.** **DEPENDABILITY COUNTS.**

* * * * *

Recently an order was shipped to Mississippi, and a second went to Michigan for a party residing in Canada. **NO GEOGRAPHICAL LIMITS.**

IMPORTANT

As recently announced, Professor Otis has resigned as Director of the Banker-Farmer Exchange to serve the American Bankers' Association in the capacity of Director of its Agricultural Commission. However, his interest in the Exchange has not waned and it should become even better known through his country-wide touch with agricultural needs.

THE EXCHANGE OFFICE IN MADISON CONTINUES and the usual service is available. When Professor Otis' successor is chosen, due announcement will be made. Bankers and patrons of the Exchange will please bear this in mind.